



Joint Supporters Group Statement – 31st January 2023

On Monday 30th January, the supporters' groups of Southend United met online to discuss the current plight of the football club and to try to find consensus of opinion. Following that meeting, we would like to provide the following update:

The groups remain united in their belief that club owner Ron Martin is not the right person to take Southend United forwards in the medium or long-term. We reiterate our strong collective opinion that, should he continue in the role for the time being, he should seriously consider outside investment to help overcome the club's immediate financial difficulties and progress the Fossetts Farm stadium project.

Last week we declared our concern that, come 1st March 2023, we may no longer have a football club to support. Knowing how important Southend United is to us all, and to the local community as a whole, we cannot allow that to happen.

In line with contingency planning for possible liquidation of the club, a working group has been established to begin urgent exploratory work around the possibility of establishing a phoenix club to take the place of Southend United within the National League System. We recognise that this is an emotive subject and it is not a decision that we have taken lightly.

The thought of Southend United as we know it ending does not bear thinking about. However, in the absence of any official evidence-based messages of reassurance coming out of the club, now is the time to stop treating the subject of a phoenix club as taboo. We would be doing the club and the fanbase a disservice by not preparing fully for such an eventuality.

We were also pleased to welcome a proxy representative from the protest group, who participated fully in the discussions. The supporters' groups were broadly supportive of the need to protest against the current ownership of the club and expressed an interest in hearing and contributing to a strategy that can unify a mass movement of Southend fans.

Due to the severity of the situation, online meetings will be continuing on a weekly basis until the beginning of March - and beyond if required. Due to the sensitive nature of some of the subjects discussed, it will not always be possible for meetings to be opened up or recorded.

This is another decision that we have not taken lightly. We want to be as transparent as the situation allows and we want supporters to feel involved in our discussions, so please get in touch via any of the groups listed with any questions or ideas. We will endeavour to find other ways in which you can connect during the process.